

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance are requested in view of the following amendments and remarks. Claims 48-57, 71-77, 80-85, 88, 91, 92, 95-99, 102-106, 112-116, 118, 120, 123-128, 130-132, 134-138 and 140-144 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 47, 58-70, 78-79, 86-87, 89-90, 93-94, 100-101, 107-111, 117, 119, 121-122, 129, 133 and 139 will be pending. No new matter has been added.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 47 and 87 are allowed and that claims 58-70, 78-79, 86, 89-90, 93-94, 100-101, 107-111, 117, 119, 121-122, 129, 133 and 139 would be allowable if amended to overcome the objections set forth in the Office Action and/or rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim Objections

The Office Action objects to claims 101-126 due to formal deficiencies. The Office Action also objects to claims 58-70, 78-79, 86, 89-90, 93-94, 100, 129, 133 and 139 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants traverse the objections for at least the following reasons.

Claims 101 and 117 have been amended to correct the formal deficiencies indicated in the Office Action. Specifically, claims 101 and 117 have been amended to include the phrase "said method" before "comprising" at line 2 of each respective claim as directed by the Office Action. Claims 102-106, 112-116, 118, 120, 123-126 have been cancelled. Claims 107-111, which depend from claim 102, and claims 119 and 121-122, which depend from claim 118, have been amended to include the phrase "said method, comprising" in each respective claim, as directed by the Office Action, and to include all of the limitations of their respective base claims and intervening claims. Therefore, due to the claim amendments above, the objections to claims 101-126 are rendered moot.

Claims 58-59, 78-79, 86, 89, 93, 100, 129, 133 and 139 have been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of their respective base claims and any intervening claims. Claims 60-70 depend from claim 59, and therefore include the limitations of claim 59. Claim 90 depends from claim 89, and therefore includes the limitations of claim 89. Claim 94 depends from claim 93, and therefore includes the limitations of claim 93. Therefore, claims 58-70, 78-79, 86, 89-90, 93-94, 100, 129, 133 and 139 now include the limitations of their respective base claims and any intervening claims, as directed by the Office Action, and the objections to these claims are rendered moot.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejections

The Office Action rejects claim 144 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,781,871 to Mezger et al. The Office Action also rejects claim 144 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,505,106 to Lawrence et al. Applicants traverse the rejections for at least the following reasons.

While Applicants do not agree with the grounds of rejection advanced by the Examiner, Applicants have cancelled claim 144, rendering the rejection of this claim moot.

The Office Action rejects claims 137 and 144 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,263,268 to Nathanson. Applicants traverse the rejection for at least the following reasons.

While Applicants do not agree with the grounds of rejection advanced by the Examiner, Applicants have cancelled claims 137 and 144, rendering the rejection of these claims moot.

The Office Action rejects claims 137 and 141-143 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,429,773 to Schuyler. Applicants traverse the rejection for at least the following reasons.

While Applicants do not agree with the grounds of rejection advanced by the Examiner, Applicants have cancelled claims 137 and 141-143, rendering the rejection of these claims moot.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejection

The Office Action rejects claims 48-57, 71-77, 80-85, 88, 91-92, 95-99, 102-106, 112-116, 118, 120, 123-128, 130-132, 134-138 and 140-144 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,295,492 to Lang et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,671,141 to Obradovich et al. and Schuyler. Applicants traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

While Applicants do not agree with the grounds of rejection advanced by the Examiner, Applicants have cancelled claims 48-57, 71-77, 80-85, 88, 91-92, 95-99, 102-106, 112-116, 118, 120, 123-128, 130-132, 134-138 and 140-144, rendering the rejection of these claims moot.

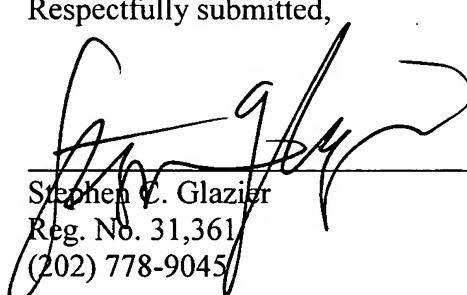
Conclusion

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance. Should the Examiner believe that this application is in condition for disposition other than allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below in order to address the Examiner's concerns. No fee is believed due at this time, but please apply any necessary charges or credits to Deposit Account 50-1721.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: _____

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